



GREENWICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Superintendent's 2013-14 Budget Message

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Academic excellence and fiscal efficiency are the dual drivers for the Superintendent's proposed 2013-14 Operating Budget. The proposed 2013-2014 operating budget is \$143,151,602, which is an increase of \$3,794,382 or 2.7% over the current year's budget. Recognizing the need for fiscal austerity, the proposed budget is largely flat in terms of services relative to the current school year (2012-2013). Contractual salary obligations account for almost half of the budget-to-budget increase. The most notable budget increase is required to establish the Greenwich Public Schools as a leader in digital teaching and learning.

MISSION, VISION, ORGANIZING PRINCIPLES

The proposed budget supports the Board of Education's Mission and Vision of a Graduate, with a focus on preparing students to excel in college and careers. The District has four primary strategic principles for improving teaching and learning:

- aligning with and building upon the ***Common Core State Standards*** (CCSS),
- ***integrating technology***,
- ***gauging progress*** through multiple measures, and
- pursuing ***innovation in schools***.

BOARD OF EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT GOALS & DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Board of Education set three goals in June 2012 for improving achievement in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics:

- The percent of Grade 3 students at Goal/Mastery in Reading on the CMT will be 83% by 2015.
- The percent of Grade 8 students at Goal/Mastery in Writing on the CMT will be 87% by 2015.
- The percent of Grade 8 students successfully passing Algebra I will be 75% by 2015.

While the goals target specific grade levels, they are intended to push improvement in grades K-12 and other curriculum areas. The proposed 2013-14 budget includes funding to support the District's Strategic Improvement Plan (DSIP), which guides the actions necessary to achieve the Board goals. In addition, the Schools' individual Strategic Improvement Plans will support the Board Goals and focus efforts on individual improvement needs at the building level.

ENROLLMENT AND DEMOGRAPHICS

The proposed budget supports staffing for a projected enrollment of 8794 students, which is a decrease of 44 students compared to 2012-13.

The District is responsible for providing instruction and services to an increasingly diverse population in terms of academic need, economics, race and ethnicity:

- 30% of the GPS student population in 2012 is minority, an increase over time from 6% in 1980
- 13% of GPS students qualify for free or reduced price lunch in 2012, an increase over time from 2% in 1980
- 13.2% of GPS students are non-English Language Dominant (2012)
- 5.4% of GPS students are English Language Learners (2012)
- 10.6% of students qualify for Special Education services (2012)

The budget also supports supervision, programs, service and maintenance for 16 buildings and over 1.5 million square feet of facilities.

2013-2014 BUDGET OVERVIEW

In developing the proposed budget, the District seriously considered the current fiscal environment in conjunction with the need to aggressively pursue improvement priorities. To that end, the budget proposes:

- funding critical improvements in standards, curriculum, and instruction,
- funding the first year of a two-year plan for establishing Greenwich as a leader in digital teaching and learning
- maximizing leadership, teaching and resources at the school and classroom level, and
- reorganizing the central office for more efficient and effective supervision and support for the schools.

BUDGET IMPACT OF PRIORITIES

The following table provides an overview of District priorities for 2013-14 and how the budget is affected.

Priority	Description	Budget Impact
Common Core State Standards (CCSS)		
Reading/Language Arts	DSIP Action Plans address Board's Reading and Writing Goals	Reallocation
Mathematics	DSIP Action Plan addresses Board's Math Goal, and programmatic changes as a result of 2012-13 Math Review	\$628,460
World Language	Upgrading textbooks and online resources	\$72,210
Physical Education	Professional learning and materials identified in Physical Education Curriculum Review approved by the BOE in June, 2012	\$7,000
Social Studies/Writing	DSIP Action Plans address Board's Writing Goal	\$17,640

Other Curriculum/Programs	Curriculum and instructional strategies will adjust to align with the Common Core State Standards	Reallocation
Digital Learning - Technology Integration		
Devices, Software, Applications	Year 1 (2013-14): \$204,598 (864 devices) for teachers, \$882,954 (4,400 devices) for students Year 2: (2014-15): additional \$882,954 (4,400 devices) for students	\$1,087,552
Professional Learning	Focused on integrating digital devices into all instruction and content	\$39,000
Staffing (2.0)	Technology Integration Specialists to support digital teaching and learning district-wide	\$150,000
Gauging Progress – Multiple Measures		
Standards Based Assessment Consortium (SBAC)	New assessment aligned with Common Core State Standards, first administration in 2014-2015 (all on-line via digital devices)	Part of Digital Learning Funding
Constituency Satisfaction	Parent, Staff, Student, and Community Leader bi-annual Harris Satisfaction Survey	\$43,300
Comprehensive Measurement System	Developing new multi-measure dashboard for monitoring progress of schools and district	Reallocation
School Innovation		
Racial Balance	Addressing the State citation of racial imbalance at New Lebanon and Hamilton Avenue Schools – funds for planning and program development	\$250,000
Magnet Theme Review	Examine current magnet schools for the strength of their themes and effects on student learning	Part of Racial Balance Funding
Contractual Obligations		
Certified	Modest salary increase as a result of the collective bargaining process, including the joint agreement in the GOSA contract for a 0% increase in 2013-14; and an increase of 2.5% in the second year of the GEA contract, with no Step increases.	\$1,225,427
Non-Certified	Modest salary increase as a result of the collective bargaining process.	\$449,649

DIGITAL LEARNING INVESTMENT

Following the Board of Education's lead, the Superintendent's proposed 2013-14 Budget features a bold investment to plan and implement digital teaching and learning as a center-piece of the Greenwich Public Schools. Operationally, digital devices will be placed in the hands of every teacher and student over the next two years. Intensive curriculum development, instructional planning, professional learning, and technical planning and modifications will be required. Moving aggressively now on digital teaching and learning is essential for the schools and the Town in preparing our students to excel in college and career. The rationale for this investment is outlined as follows:

- Improves Student Achievement:** School districts that are early pioneers of 1:1 digital learning programs have demonstrated improved student achievement in reading, writing and math when properly and regularly implemented. The 1:1 digital program also supports online learning to help fulfill graduation requirements as outlined in the Secondary School Reform Act.

- ***Prepares Students for College and Career:*** Digital learning prepares students for higher education and the workplace by giving them the tools to emulate those experiences. According to a recent study, about 75% of adults are required to use computers in their workplaces.
- ***Supports Common Core State Standards:*** The CCSS require a high-level of rigor and 21st century learning - almost 50% of the new standards explicitly involve technology. Students will need to use technology as a tool for learning to meet the standards. Regular digital access in the core curriculum areas will be necessary to achieve these standards.
- ***Supports Shifts in Instructional Practice:*** Digital learning environments help shift instructional practice by providing teachers the tools and resources to move from lecture-based to student-centered instruction. Teachers shift from interpreter to moderator and facilitator, increasing students' accountability for their learning.
- ***Supports Universal Access:*** In a 1:1 digital learning environment, personalized instruction is possible providing opportunities for differentiation and automating progress monitoring to improve achievement. This digital learning model provides accessibility to meet the needs of our students with special needs and supports individual education plans.
- ***Supports Digital Content:*** More and more publishers are providing digital content and digital textbooks requiring students to be able to access the materials at school and home through a 1:1 program. Districts cannot afford to continually refresh textbooks. Open source content, as well as teacher and student ability to create personalized content is necessary. Digital learning environments promote this practice and provide the tools to make it happen.

BUDGET REDUCTIONS AND REALLOCATIONS:

In an effort to address fiscal constraints, the Superintendent has offset new investments with targeted budget reductions and reallocations. Several major points should be highlighted:

- ***Maintaining level funding*** in most program areas– cost of living increase was not applied, zero-based budgeting effectively resulted in decreased budgets in relation to the prior year's allocation.
- ***Reallocation*** to focus funding on improvement priorities – professional learning, curriculum, program and department budgets have been reallocated to focus on District and school priorities. Examples include:
 - Science Program (34) – budget reflects a \$174, 351 reduction as a result of shifting allocations for curriculum review changes from the Science program, which will be completed this year, to other curriculum reviews slated for 2013-14 (Math, Social Studies, etc.)
 - Library Media & Technology (40) – funding has been reallocated from the SmartBoard implementation plan, which has largely been completed to fund, in part, the digital learning improvements.

- **Reorganization** – Planned reorganization of Central Office staff will reduce the budget by approximately \$245,000 (savings of \$91,000 in benefit costs for TOG Budget)
- **Reductions** – examples of reductions in program budgets include:
 - Schools/Deputy Superintendent (68) – reduced need for offsite professional learning for Data Team implementation (Datawise Program at Harvard (\$22,000))
 - Schools/Deputy Superintendent (68) – reduced funding required for supplemental programs, same formula applied as in 2012-13 based on student need, less students meet supplemental program need level.(\$25,000)
- **Denied Staffing Requests** – It was determined that several requests for additional staffing be denied in setting priorities for the proposed budget. Two such requests should be noted:
 - GEA Essentials Staff – the GEA contract called for a review of FTE's allocated for Essentials Staffing (Art, Music, Physical Education, etc.). A request to add 2.1 FTE's (\$157,500) was denied.
 - Aquatics Teachers – a request for an additional aquatics teacher noted in the Physical Education Curriculum Review, approved by the Board in June 2012, has been denied (1.0 FTE, \$75,000)

SUMMARY

We stand for high quality student learning and the wise use of taxpayer funds. To that end, the Superintendent's Proposed 2013-2014 Budget represents a major investment in advancing student learning and supporting our top quality leaders, faculty and staff. The proposed budget also reflects efforts to maintain level services, and reduce and reallocate funding wherever possible.

The Greenwich Public Schools are known for excellence across Connecticut and the Nation. Part of the district's strength is a willingness to acknowledge areas requiring improvement and to make changes to improve results. The proposed Budget operationalizes this essential drive for excellence and continuous improvement. With strong support from the Greenwich community and taxpayers, the Greenwich Public Schools will be beacons of educational success.

Sincerely,



William S. McKersie, Ph.D.
Superintendent